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FOOTBALL PREVIEW FALL 2021 MONDAY, AUGUST 30, 2021 THE ORACLE

Cade Fortin: Faith through adversity



Sophomore quarterback Cade Fortin will get a chance to start for the first time in his USF career against NC State on Sept. 2. SPECIAL TO THE ORACLE/USF ATHLETICS PHOTO

By Francisco Rosa

Consistency and adversity — these words have defined Cade Fortin's career up until now.

The 6-foot-3-inch quarterback has been faced with struggles at nearly every point of his football journey, but he's consistently found a way to rise above and continue to follow his dream. From season-ending injuries to coaching changes and being overlooked by other college programs, he never gave up.

Now, Fortin said he hopes to define a new chapter of his career as starting quarterback for the USF Bulls.

"I'm a huge guy of faith," Fortin said after being named starting quarterback. "I think through the adversity and all the things that I've been through, [I've been] just going back and leaning on my faith and ... how

I was raised, [as] a big believer in God."

A native of Suwannee, Georgia, Fortin arrived at USF in spring 2020 after transferring from North Carolina.

Not long after setting foot on campus, Fortin, like much of the college football world, saw his future in question following the arrival of the pandemic that left him without the ability to practice and grow a rapport with his new teammates.

Fortin found himself fourth on the depth chart going into the fall season and only saw action in a pair of blowout losses against Cincinnati and Tulsa, the latter of which resulted in him suffering a season-ending shoulder injury.

Despite the slow and obstaclefilled start to his career with the Bulls, Fortin demonstrated a level of diligence and leadership that caught the attention of coach Jeff Scott and made him stand out among the three other quarterbacks vying for the starting job.

"It wasn't easy for him last year and especially early on he had a lot of work to do," Scott said. "So I learned a lot about him, watching him respond from that [and] the movement and everything going on. A lot of guys [would] just say, 'Hey, it's not meant to be,' and just pack it up and go home. [But] he kept going to work every day and just showing up and getting better.

"I think you learn a lot about people when you watch them in times of adversity. When things are going good, I think everybody can put on a good face, but when things don't go your way, you watch and you learn about them. So I think that was probably the biggest thing that stuck out to me."

The mentality Scott witnessed

from Fortin over the last year and a half isn't anything new, however. It was ingrained in him long before he ever arrived in Tampa.

Fortin first came face to face with adversity as a sophomore at North Gwinnett High School in Suwannee.

In his first year taking over the Bulldogs' offense, Fortin inherited a team in disarray due to a school split that saw Lanier High School break off from North Gwinnett, taking a large percentage of the student body and forcing a major roster turnover on the football team.

Bob Sphire was Fortin's head coach up to his senior year. If not for Fortin's leadership and adaptability during the split, Sphire said the team wouldn't have reached the heights it did in the following two years.

"We had a great problem that we really struggled with, a phase where really [the team] around [Fortin] had been depleted and he just kept on working, just kept the course, just really physically took a lot of physical pounding that year and just kept on plugging," Sphire said.

"He never had a bad day, never whined, never complained and that was huge getting us through that transition and rebuilding the program. He really bridged that transition at North Gwinnett from the school split, getting it back to a championship-caliber program."

As a senior, Fortin was ranked the fifth-best quarterback in Georgia in the class of 2018, behind future first-round NFL draft picks Trevor Lawrence and Justin Fields. He looked ready to lead the Bulldogs to their first-ever state championship.

However, after breaking his leg in the second game of the

See FORTIN on PAGE 5

Fortin

Continued from PAGE 4

season, he had to watch from the sidelines as his team captured the elusive title four years in the making.

again, Fortin had Once to demonstrate the type of character and leadership that's become emblematic of his career. North Gwinnett's Offensive Coordinator Stephen Jackson took notice when they worked together his senior year.

"The team would run to the sideline after a touchdown, [and] the first guy to congratulate his replacement was Cade," Jackson said. "I think that mattered a lot to the success of that backup."

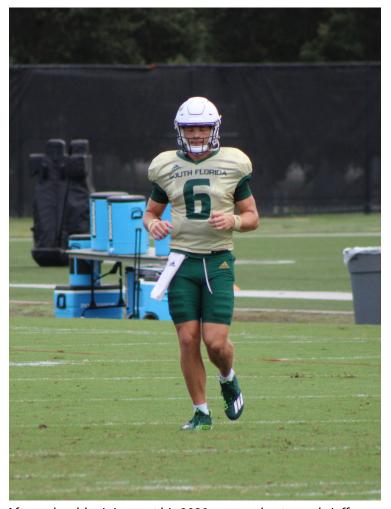
He was in awe at the type of maturity Fortin showed over the course of the season.

"We live in a world where a lot of people care about themselves way more than they care about anybody else," Jackson said. "Football teams got less of that — if they're successful — than regular society, but [even] good, successful football teams have some of that. [But] he was just as happy for the kid that ended up playing quarterback, who became a very good player for us, as I think he would've been for himself had he done all those things."

Though unable to play as a senior, Fortin saw no shortage of college interest. He committed to Texas A&M with coach Kevin Sumlin midway through the season, but the arrival of Jimbo Fisher made him pivot and eventually land at North Carolina.

After starting a couple of games at Chapel Hill, Fortin's future was once again thrown into uncertainty as former national champion head coach Mack Brown came to UNC for his second stint leading the program.

Fortin eventually decided to transfer after losing the quarterback battle to four-star



After a shoulder injury cut his 2020 season short, coach Jeff Scott has praised Fortin for his improvement during the offseason, ORACLE PHOTO/FRANCISCO ROSA

recruit Sam Howell. Sphire, who's been a part of his journey so far, said he believes his resilience through these obstacles will lead him to success with the Bulls.

"He's been through this story of a guy that just keeps the dream alive and keeps the process going no matter what's thrown at him," Sphire said. "Now he's got a chance to really be the guy and lead this program through a transition with coach Scott there and be the one that helps establish [Scott's] program."

Fortin admitted there were moments when he was unsure of the path he was taking, but thanks to his faith and Scott's belief in him, he's put the past in the rearview mirror.

"There's a verse that I've leaned on ever since high school when I got injured and I was out the whole year," Fortin said. "Jeremiah 29:11, 'For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans to prosper and plans to give you hope and a future.' I took that to heart, and I still think about it all the time.

"Looking back on it two years, [when I transferred], I thought, 'Where are you taking me?' But looking back two years later, I wouldn't want to change anything about it."

EDITORS' PREDICTIONS

Oracle Sports Co-Editors Richard Silva and Francisco Rosa give their game-by-game predictions for the 2021 season.

	Francisco Rosa	Richard Silva
Week 1 at NC State	∟ 35-21	L 31-17
Week 2 vs. Florida	∟ 45-7	L 49-14
Week 3 vs. Florida A&M	w 38-10	w 28-14
Week 4 at BYU	L 28-13	w 31-28
Week 5 at SMU	w 30-28	∟ 27-24
Week 7 vs. Tulsa	∟ 24-17	∟ 34-20
Week 8 vs. Temple	w 42-28	w 27-20
Week 9 at ECU	w 35-30	∟ 28-21
Week 10 vs. Houston	∟ 38-17	∟ 38-21
Week 11 vs. Cincinnati	∟ 52-21	∟ 34-28
Week 12 at Tulane	w 28-7	w 24-20
Week 13 vs. UCF	^L 48-40	^L 42-35

Making a mark both on and off the field

By Lanie De La Milera

Senior linebacker Antonio Grier has steadily worked his way up the depth chart since arriving to USF in 2018, going from mostly a special teamer as a freshman to becoming one of the AAC's top linebackers heading into his senior season.

As a Second Team All-AAC selection last season, Grier had a career year. In just eight games he was able to post 59 tackles — good for tenth best in the AAC — as well as three sacks.

His upcoming season could be even better. Although he had to toughen through an injury, it changed his mentality over the offseason.

"In the spring I was injured, but I was making sure I was out there every practice," Grier said. "I was running behind the guys, sprinting to the ball. I was getting every coaching point. It was a mental thing, I learned how to become a teammate during the spring and I needed that. I needed to learn how to become a better teammate.

"Now that I'm back for the fall, I feel like I've got all the tools that I need. I became a better teammate, mentally [and] physically restored and rebuilt myself and became a better person all around. I'm a strong believer [that] everything happens for a reason. So, I feel like that was the reason [for my injury], for me to become a better teammate. When I'm not in, we cheer our guys on that's on the field, because it only takes one



Defensive Coordinator Glenn Spencer said he has "high aspirations" for linebacker Antonio Grier as he enters his senior year. SPECIAL TO THE ORACLE/USF ATHLETICS

play."

Defensive Coordinator Glenn Spencer has witnessed Grier's performance firsthand, and said he's excited to see what the senior linebacker can do this season.

"I've got high aspirations for him," Spencer said. "[I want him to] make plays and be active. The biggest thing with Antonio, and I don't think he'd mind me saying this, is just being consistent week in and week out, and he has been in this camp.

"Coach [Jeff Scott] gave him one of his post-game chips the other day after practice, saying that was the most consistent he's ever been since we've been here ... [I have confidence he's going to] have a good season for us."

Spencer isn't the only one who thinks Grier could be primed for a big year, as he was named to the Reese's Senior Bowl Watchlist, a list of players to keep an eye on who may receive an invite to the event. The Senior Bowl is an all-star game which allows for the best players in college football to go up against one another after the end of the season.

But his work off the field is just as, if not more, important to him.

"Since I was a kid, [my dreams were] to play in the NFL," Grier said. "But sometimes it's bigger than just playing football. My biggest thing that I want to do before I leave this university is leave a legacy."

Grier is deeply involved

with the USF community as the president of both Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc. and the Black Student Athlete Council as well as the diversity liaison of the Student Athlete Advisory Committee.

Through his experiences at USF over the past years, Grier, a Georgia native and criminology major, has grown to love not only USF's campus but also the surrounding Tampa area.

"I'm actually planning on staying in Tampa or in Florida after [I graduate to] make this my new home," Grier said. "I love Tampa, I love this university, I give my heart to it every day, every time I wake up.

"I would love to go into the

NFL [and] pursue my dreams, but I want to be a mentor and maybe come back and coach here or work in the marketing department."

At the end of the day, Grier's football experience as well as all of his off-field commitments has made him into the man he is today.

"I didn't just come here to play football," Grier said. "I came here to leave my legacy and to leave my mark on this university."

2021 Football Schedule

WEEK 1

Thursday, Sept. 2 at 7:30 p.m. ACC Network

@ NC State

Carter-Finley Stadium

WEEK 2

Saturday, Sept. 11 at 1 p.m.

ABC

Vs. Florida

Raymond James Stadium

WEEK 3

Saturday, Sept. 18 at 7 p.m.

ESPN+

Vs. Florida A&M

Raymond James Stadium

WEEK 4

Saturday, Sept. 25 TBA

TV TBA

@ BYU

Lavell Edwards Stadium

WEEK 5

Saturday, Oct. 2 TBA

TV TBA

@ SMU

Gerald J. Ford Stadium

WEEK 7

Saturday, Oct. 16 TBA

TV TBA

Vs. Tulsa

Raymond James Stadium

WEEK 8

Saturday, Oct. 23 TBA

TV TBA

Vs. Temple

Raymond James Stadium

WEEK 9

Thursday, Oct. 28 at 7:30 p.m.

ESPN @ ECU

Dowdy-Ficklen Stadium

WEEK 10

Saturday, Nov. 6 TBA

TV TBA

Vs. Houston

Raymond James Stadium

WEEK 11

Friday, Nov. 12 at 6 p.m.

ESPN 2

Vs. Cincinnati

Raymond James Stadium

WEEK 12

Saturday, Nov. 20 TBA

TV TBA

@ Tulane

Yulman Stadium

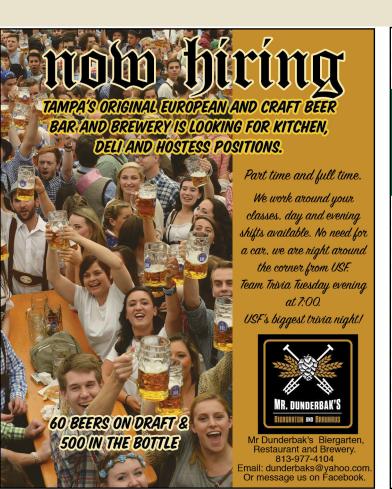
WEEK 13

Friday, Nov. 26 TBA

TV TBA

@ UCF

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FOOTBALL PREVIEW FALL 2021 MONDAY, AUGUST 30, 2021 THE ORACLE

Players to watch at each position

By Richard Silva

As the second year of the Jeff Scott era approaches, excitement and eagerness looms over the program.

The Bulls are looking to bounce back after a rough season in 2020 marred by injuries, COVID-19-related issues and, ultimately, losses. After defeating the Citadel to open the season, the Bulls went on to lose their final eight games of the year.

If USF's record is going to change, the players will undoubtedly play a large role. Here are a few players to keep an eye on throughout the season.

Quarterback — Cade Fortin

It's been a long, windy road that's led junior quarterback Cade Fortin to this position, being tabbed the starting quarterback for the Bulls in 2021.

From breaking his left leg senior year of high school to transferring out of North Carolina after just one season and then suffering a shoulder injury against Tulsa in 2020, it hasn't been easy for the Georgia native to find his footing at USF.

But over time, he was able to get more comfortable within the system.

"[I'm] really proud of Cade," Scott said in an Aug. 24 press conference. "He's had a really outstanding year, from spring practice, to the summer, to fall camp. He's worked extremely hard. ... Since January he's been working extremely hard and really established himself as one of our leaders on our team. [He's] just been very consistent throughout spring practice, summer workouts and fall camp. So, [I'm] looking forward to having him lead us here [Sept. 2]."

If Fortin can come in and establish himself as a reliable signal caller in the AAC, USF's offense may be more than meets



Junior wide receiver Xavier Weaver (with ball) had a strong performance in the spring game in March as he caught three passes for 97 yards and two touchdowns. SPECIAL TO THE ORACLE/USF ATHLETICS

the eye.

Running back — Jaren Mangham

Junior running back Jaren Mangham has spent the last two years with the Colorado Buffaloes, but has been making noise in fall camp for the Bulls since transferring over in the offseason.

Mangham has reportedly scored in all three of USF's scrimmages during camp and could help boost the running back position after redshirt sophomore Leonard Parker tore his ACL earlier in the year and freshman K'Wan Powell suffered a knee injury which will likely sideline him for the season.

The running back position is one of the deepest for USF, as Mangham is joined by sophomores Brian Battie and Yasias Young, juniors Kelley Joiner and Mychael Hamilton and senior Darrian Felix in the backfield.

Wide receiver — Xavier Weaver

Former USF wide receiver DeVontres Dukes was second on the team last year in receiving yards and paced the offense with four touchdowns through the air.

With his departure, the Bulls are in need of someone to step up into a bigger role, which junior receiver Xavier Weaver may be able to do.

In the spring game earlier this year, Weaver hauled in three passes for 97 yards and two touchdowns, appearing to have a special connection with newly appointed starting quarterback Fortin.

> Tight end — Mitchell Brinkman

Graduate student tight end Mitchell Brinkman had his first year with the Bulls last season, after transferring into the program from Northern Illinois, and he proved to be a valuable asset for the team both in the passing and run games.

Through nine games and seven starts, Brinkman caught 15 passes for 161 yards and a touchdown, while also blocking in the run game. In his second year at USF, a boost in production from Brinkman would be helpful for the offense.

Offensive line — Donovan Jennings

Senior offensive lineman Donovan Jennings is returning for his fourth year within the program, where he has started 19 games over three years. Not only

See PLAYERS on PAGE 10



Senior offensive lineman Donovan Jennings started in seven of the eight games for the Bulls last season. SPECIAL TO THE ORACLE/USF ATHLETICS

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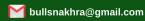
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PLAYERS

Continued from PAGE 8

is Jennings returning, the entire starting offensive line from last season is running it back in 2021.

"Definitely with the offensive line, having that cohesion, you know who's going to be to the right and left of you, that's a big component in o-line play because communication is big in our room," Jennings said Aug. 24. "We talk all the time, go over pressures [and] blitzes, so it's real comfortable just knowing who's going to be next to you. We consider ourselves a veteran group, we [have] to get the job done.

"It's great having that camaraderie [and] willingness to play for each other. We've been playing for each other for so long, it's like second nature now, so it's a great feeling."

Defensive line — Rashawn Yates

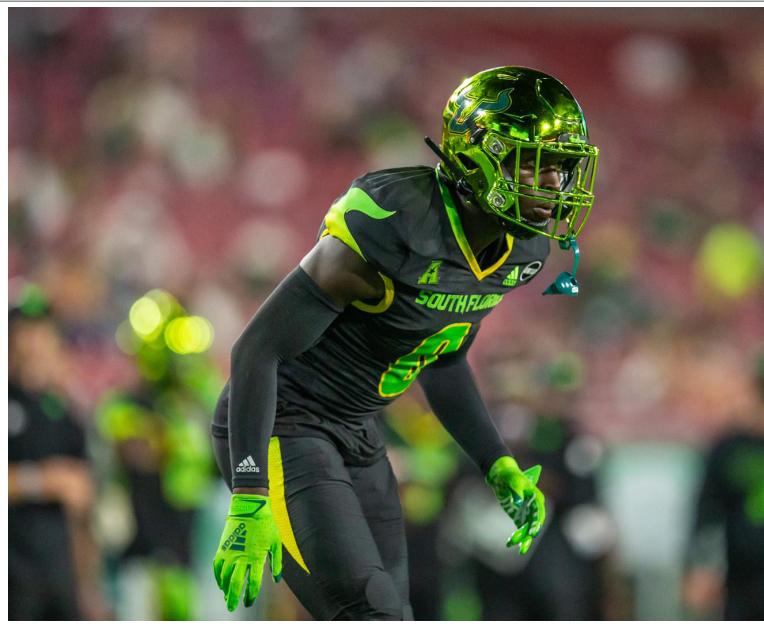
It's been a consistent climb for senior defensive end Rashawn Yates since he got to the program as a freshman in 2018. His number of starts has increased every year, and so has his production.

Yates started nine games in 2020, racking up 19 tackles, 2.5 tackles for loss, a sack and a forced fumble. As he begins his senior season, a strong performance would be beneficial to USF's defensive line.

Linebacker — Mac Harris

Sophomore linebacker Mac Harris was one of the brighter spots for the Bulls last year in a season where there wasn't much to cheer for.

As a true freshman, Harris appeared in seven games and started two at linebacker. In his first-ever collegiate start, he tallied eight tackles and even pulled down an interception



Junior defensive back Daquan Evans proved to be a valuable asset in the secondary for the Bulls last season, pulling down three interceptions in 2020. SPECIAL TO THE ORACLE/USF ATHLETICS

against Cincinnati.

Although senior linebacker Antonio Grier likely has the starting job locked down, Harris can still be a valuable asset next to Grier and work under him for a potential starting role in 2022.

Defensive back — Daquan Evans

Similar to Harris, junior defensive back Daquan Evans was someone who fans could look at glowingly for his play on the field last season. Evans managed to lead the team in interceptions with three and seemed to have a knack for making plays after securing the turnover. In three consecutive games, Evans had interception returns of 56 yards, 31 yards and 51 yards, coming just 27 yards shy of breaking USF's single-season interception return yards record.

Kicker — Spencer Shrader

The 2020 Bulls had an interesting kicking situation. Senior kicker Jared Sackett spent

most of his time kicking field goals within 40 yards and making PATs, but junior kicker Spencer Shrader was USF's big boot, coming in on kicks from over 40 yards.

The duo combined to be 9-of-13 on the year on field goals. Shrader's best game of the season came against Memphis where he knocked down each of the four field goals he attempted.

Punter — Kenny Scribner

Redshirt sophomore punter Kenny Scribner was a bit of a do-it-all man for the Bulls on special teams last season, serving as a punter, kicker and holder at different points.

As a punter, he launched seven balls for an average of 35.4 yards per punt. His competition this year will be freshman Andrew Stokes, a native of Australia playing for the Bulls for the first time in 2021.

Get to know USF's 2021 opponents

FOOTBALL PREVIEW FALL 2021

By Leonardo Santos and Richard Silva
CORRESPONDENT AND SPORTS
CO-EDITOR

With perhaps its toughest schedule since the 2017 season, including a couple of games against multiple preseason top 25 teams, coach Jeff Scott and the USF football team will have their hands full as they try to bounce back from last year's 1-8 showing.

Highlights of this year's schedule include home games against No. 17 Florida and No. 8 Cincinnati, both of which will be vying for spots in the College Football Playoff.

Here's a breakdown of USF's opponents this season.

@ NC State (Sept. 2)

Head coach: Dave Doeren (ninth season)

2020 Record: 8-4 (7-3 ACC)

After suffering a broken foot that ruled him out for most of last season, redshirt sophomore Devin Leary will return as starting quarterback for the Wolfpack this season.

He was most recently named to the preseason watchlist for the 2021 Johnny Unitas Golden Arm Award, which is presented annually to the nation's top upperclassman quarterback. Containing Leary will be integral to USF's success in Week I.

Vs. No. 17 Florida (Sept. 11)

Head coach: Dan Mullen (fourth season)

2020 Record: 8-4 (8-2 SEC)

Fresh off yet another appearance in the SEC championship game, UF will be one of the toughest matchups for the Bulls this season. The Gators are loaded with talent on both sides of the ball.

Offensively, the highly touted

redshirt junior Emory Jones will replace Heisman finalist Kyle Trask. Jones is also on the Johnny Unitas watchlist. He threw for 221 yards and two touchdowns in nine appearances last season.

On the defensive side, junior cornerback Kaiir Elam and redshirt senior defensive lineman Zachary Carter were named to the 2021 Preseason Coaches All-SEC First Team. Elam is also projected as a first-round pick in next year's NFL draft, according to Pro Football Network.

Vs. Florida A&M (Sept. 18)

Head coach: Willie Simmons (fourth season)

2020 Record: 0-0

After having last season canceled due to COVID-19, the Rattlers had quite the coaching turnover, announcing three new coaches coming in for the new season.

Ryan Stanchek will be the new co-offensive coordinator and offensive line coach, Shane Tucker will serve as the running backs coach, and Milton Patterson is the new defensive line coach.

Away from the coaching staff, fans can keep an eye on redshirt senior wide receiver Xavier Smith, who was named to the MEAC First Team in 2019 after an impressive season where he led the MEAC in receiving yards (928), receiving yards per game (II6.6) and receptions (62).

This year will also be FAMU's first season competing in the Southwestern Athletic Conference.

@ BYU (Sept. 25)

Head coach: Kalani Sitake (sixth season)

2020 Record: 11-1



USF students fresh out of the pandemic will have the chance to attend their first in-person home football game Sept. 11 against UF. SPECIAL TO THE ORACLE/USF ATHLETICS

The Cougars are likely to regress following one of the best seasons in program history, which saw the school beat UCF in the Boca Raton Bowl.

Replacing the No. 2 overall pick in the NFL Draft is never easy, but sophomore quarterback Jaren Hall will be tasked with it after Zach Wilson was selected by the Jets in April.

The sophomore quarterback started twice in 2019, throwing for 420 yards and touchdown, but injuries and the talent of Wilson caused Hall to spend plenty of time on the sidelines in 2020.

@ SMU (Oct. 2)

Head coach: Sonny Dykes (fifth season)

2020 Record: 7-3 (4-3 AAC)

The Mustangs were tabbed to finish third in the AAC by preseason media poll behind Cincinnati and UCF, respectively.

The Cougars return 18 starters from last year's team which reached as high as No.16 in the polls.

SMU still hasn't determined

who its starting quarterback will be for the new season, but the battle continues between junior quarterback Tanner Mordecai, who transferred from Oklahoma University, and fellow junior quarterback Derek Green.

Vs. Tulsa (Oct. 16)

Head coach: Philip Montgomery (seventh season) 2020 Record: 6-3 (6-0 AAC)

The big news coming out from the Tulsa camp is that the

See OPPONENTS on PAGE 12



Coach Jeff Scott is entering his second year at the helm for the Bulls, looking to rebound from a frustrating season in 2020. ORACLE PHOTO/FRANCISCO ROSA

OPPONENTS

Continued from PAGE 11

Hurricanes will have the same starting quarterback in back-toback seasons for the first time since 2016 with redshirt senior Zach Smith.

Smith posted big numbers last season as he threw for 1,947 yards and 13 touchdowns. He also completed 56% of his passes and led his team to three comeback wins.

Defensively, losing AAC defensive player of the year Zaven Collins will hurt a team that ranked second in the conference in points allowed.

Vs. Temple (Oct. 23)

Head coach: Rod Carey (third season)

2020 Record: 1-6 (1-6 AAC)

The Owls were able to bring in redshirt freshman quarterback D'Wan Mathis via the transfer portal from Georgia, a former four star recruit coming out of high school, according to 247Sports.

Carey didn't wait long to name Mathis his starter in 2020, beating out redshirt sophomore Re-al Mitchell and graduate student Anthony Russo for the job.

Temple was ranked second to last in the preseason media poll, but a player of Mathis' stature, a former four-star recruit, may give an Owls' offense that scored just 19.9 points per game a little more pop.

@ ECU (Oct. 28)

Head coach: Mike Houston (third season)

2020 Record: 3-6 (3-5 AAC)

The Bulls will have to travel to Greenville, NC, to take on the Pirates and will be looking to avenge one of their most disappointing losses of 2020.

Last season, ECU defeated USF 44-24 in Raymond James Stadium and failed to take advantage of a defense that allowed 35.4 points per game, the third worst in the AAC.

If the Bulls want to change

the outcome this time around, containing junior quarterback Holton Ahlers, who lit them up last year for 222 yards and three touchdowns, will be huge.

Vs. Houston (Nov. 6)

Head coach: Dana Holgorsen (third season)

2020 Record: 3-5 (3-3 AAC)

Junior quarterback Clayton Tune is entering his second consecutive year as the full-time starter for the Cougars.

Tune stepped into the starting role in 2019 after former Houston quarterback D'Eriq King decided to redshirt and eventually transfer to Miami. He started every game in 2020 for Houston, tallying 2,048 passing yards on a 59.6% completion rate.

Specifically against the Bulls, Tune was 14-for-25 passing the ball for 165 yards and three touchdowns. He also did work in the ground game, rushing for 120 yards and two touchdowns on 10 attempts.

Vs. No. 8 Cincinnati (Nov. 12)

Head coach: Luke Fickell (fifth season)

2020 Record: 9-I (6-0 AAC)

If the AP Poll is any indication, the Bearcats will be the toughest task for the Bulls in 2021.

A preseason top 10 team, Cincinnati is returning senior quarterback Desmond Ridder on the offensive side of the ball, and junior cornerback Ahmad Gardner on the defensive end.

The Bearcats are one of the most complete teams in the country averaging 37.5 points per game and holding their opponents to 16.8, best in the conference.

@ Tulane (Nov. 20)

Head coach: Willie Fritz (sixth season)

2020 Record: 6-6 (3-5 AAC)

Freshman quarterback Michael Pratt gave Tulane a strong boost last season in his first collegiate season.

Pratt led the Green Wave to a

6-6 overall record and ended the season with 1,806 passing yards and 20 passing touchdowns to go along with just eight interceptions. He also logged another eight touchdowns on the ground.

@ UCF (Nov. 26)

Head coach: Gus Malzahn (first season)

2020 Record: 6-4, (5-3 AAC)

In an exciting matchup last season, the Bulls nearly came back from a first-half deficit to beat the Knights in the final game of the season, but ultimately fell 58-46.

Junior quarterback Dillon Gabriel is one of the more impressive quarterbacks the AAC has to offer, rarely turning the ball over while still posting big numbers.

With an offensive-minded head coach like Malzahn taking over the program after a great run at Auburn, the Knights will likely continue their streak of being the league's top offense.



Scott and his team will have their work cut out for them when they host No. 8 Cincinnati and No. 17 Florida, both of which are looking to secure spots in the College Football Playoff.

ORACLE PHOTO/FRANCISCO ROSA

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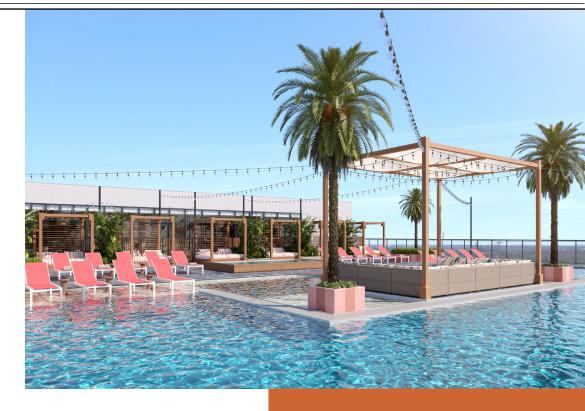
2021 Roster

#	FULL NAME	POS.	YEAR
0	Daquan Evans	DB	Jr.
0	Jaren Mangham	RB	Jr.
I	Matthew Hill	S	So.
I	Jarren Williams	QB	So.
2	Darrian Felix	RB	Sr.
2	TJ Robinson	DB	R-So.
3	Vincent Davis	S	Sr.
3	Kelley Joiner	RB	Jr.
4	Omarion Dollison	WR	So.
4	Christian Williams	S	So.
5	Antonio Grier	LB	Sr.
5	Jimmy Horn Jr.	WR	Fr.
6	Cade Fortin	QB	So.
6	Gabe Nealy	СВ	Fr.
7	Sincere Brown	WR	So.
7	Will Jones 11	S	Fr.
8	Christopher Townsel	DB	So.
8	Latrell Williams	WR	Sr.
9	Davon Hicks	LB	Fr.
9	Timmy McClain	QB	Fr.
ĺO	Kevin Kegler	ĎΤ	
IO	Xavier Weaver	WR	Jr.
II	Dwayne Boyles	LB	Śr.
II	Yusuf Terry	WR	So.
12	Ben Knox	CB	So.
12	Katravis Marsh	QB	So.
13	Tramel Logan	DE	So.
13	Nickolas Tshivuadi	WR	Fr.
I4	AJ Hamilton	CB	So.
Ι4	Ridge Jacobs	QB	Fr.
15	Jayden Curry	DB	R-So.
15	Gunnar Greenwald	TE	Fr.
16	Brock Nichols	S	
17	Blake Green	DT	
18	Demarcus Gregory	WR	Jr.
18	Jordan Smith	S	So.
19	Jalen Herring	DB	Fr.
19	Bryce Miller	WR	Sr.
20	Demaurez Bellamy	LB	Jr.
2I	Brian Battie	RB	So.
2I	Jaelen Stokes	DB	Fr.
22	Mekhi LaPointe	DB	Sr.
22	K'Wan Powell	RB	Fr.
23	Thad Mangum	DT	
23	Holden Willis	WR	So.
24	Mac Harris	LB	So.
25	Lewai Mitchell	S	Fr.

25	Kenny Scribner	P	R-So.
26	Keyon Helton	LB	Jr.
26	Yasias Young	RB	So.
27	Jordan Blackmon	S	Fr.
27	Leonard Parker	RB	R-Fr.
28	Jared Sackett	K	Sr.
28	Dequan Stanley	CB	Fr.
29	Brian Norris	LB	Jr.
30	Isaiah Cromarty	DB	Sr.
32	CJ Ross	LB	Fr.
32	Spencer Shrader	K	Jr.
33	Timarcus Simpson	CB	Fr.
34	Joshua Green	DB	Sr.
36	Andrew Stokes	P	Fr.
37	Jamal Nash	LB	So.
38	Sean Atkins	WR	R-So.
38	Randal Copeland	LB	Jr.
39	John Cannon	K	Fr.
40	Jason Vaughn	DE	Jr.
4I	Mychael Hamilton	RB	Ĵr.
42	Jamari Stewart	DE	Fr.
43	La'Javier Turner	DB	So.
44	Thomas Nance	TE	R-So.
45	Darrien Grant	DE	Sr.
47	Le'Vontae Camiel	DE	So.
48	Andrew Beardall	LS	Jr.
50	Bryce Bernard	LS	So.
51	Stacy Kirby	DT	Jr.
52	Michael Wiggs	OL	
53	Drew Cornelius	OL	Fr.
54	Amer Amer	LB	Fr.
55	Colby Smith	DE	Fr.
56	Mack Gresham	LS	Fr.
57	Joshua Blanchard	OL	R-So.
58	Reggie Johnson II	LB	Fr.
59	Andrew Mims	LB	Sr.
60	Patrick Manconi	OL	So.
61	Gannon Lanning	OL	Fr.
62	Matthew McDuffie	OL	R-So.
63	Brock Parry	OL	So.
64	Demetris Harris	OL	Sr.
67	Demontrey Jacobs	OL	Sr.
68	Remy Bikowski	OL	So.
70	Sebastian Sainterling	OL	Jr.
7I	Uriah Greene	OL	So.
72	Cole Best	OL	Fr.
73	Donovan Jennings	OL	Sr.
74	Brad Cecil	OL	Sr.
75	Andrew Kilfoyl	OL	Fr.
. /	- /		

76	Jarret Hopple	OL	
77	Cesar Reyes	OL	So.
78	Alec Valet	OL	R-So.
79	Dustyn Hall	OL	R-So.
80	Bailey Purcell	WR	So.
81	Garret Reynolds	WR	So.
82	Michael Cucci	WR	So.
83	Logan Berryhill	WR	R-So.
85	Christian Helms	WR	R-So.
86	Flaubert Akepeu	TE	R-So.
88	Chris Carter	TE	Jr.
89	Mitchell Brinkman	TE	
91	Rashawn Yates	DE	Sr.
93	Tyrone Barber	DE	Sr.
94	Keeon Terrel	DE	Fr.
96	Kelvin Pinkney	DT	
97	Will Fowler	K	Fr.
98	De'Juan Sease	DT	Jr.
99	Ryan Thaxton	DE	Sr.
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